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Mercy Corps and the Jakarta Flood: How Development Partnerships Improve Emergency Response

By the Mercy Corps Indonesia Civil Society Team

Introduction

Following Jakarta flood of February 2002, Mercy Corps reflected informally about its response, and the Indonesia team was encouraged by the Director of Program Operations to document its experience and the results of any self-evaluation. The objectives of this case study are to document both Mercy Corps' response and beneficiaries' reactions to the response; identify some strengths and weaknesses in Mercy Corps' approach and the organization's advantages and disadvantages in providing assistance during a Jakarta emergency; and suggest ways to improve Mercy Corps' response to urban emergencies in the future.

Methodology

This case study is based on a field survey of flood-aid beneficiaries in four areas of Jakarta, two focus group discussions with beneficiaries of assistance, interviews with MC staff and others involved in the flood relief, and a review of documents and news reports. Using a questionnaire, the survey team interviewed 25 people from each of these four sections of Jakarta: Kedaung Kali Angke, Prumpung, Slipi, and Kampung Melayu, four areas receiving assistance during the flood from Mercy Corps and other organizations.¹ Mercy Corps operates a food-for-work program in the first two areas but has no direct ongoing presence in the third and fourth areas.

Mercy Corps in Indonesia Transitional Activity Program (TAP).

With funding from USAID, Mercy Corps has implemented food distribution activities in Jakarta since 1999. The objective of the current program is to mitigate the effects of conflict and the economic crisis in poor urban communities and promote recovery. Mercy Corps' four main activities under the TAP are:

1. Providing temporary food-for-work (FFW) for the poor in Jakarta

¹ The contracted survey team members were Argenti Panca P., Deasy Ria Santi, Djadjat Sudrajat, and Indriyani Ratnaningsih. The sample was admittedly too small to be a definitive quantitative survey, but it provided a snapshot of flood assistance and narrative feedback on aid providers.

2. Working with Indonesian NGOs to help organize communities for FFW
3. Distributing food to institutions such as orphanages, schools, and hospitals
4. Providing food to groups such as vulnerable mothers and children under five years of age

At the time of the flood, the project was providing FFW to about 4,500 people in 14 neighborhoods of Jakarta and distributing food to 10,000 people through local institutions.

NGO Grants and other programs. Mercy Corps also runs a Grants project funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The project is designed to support food security, improve the economic status of Indonesians, and provide training and capacity building. The project does this through grants to local NGOs, prioritizing relief assistance. The project also funds NGOs providing health and nutrition care and education, support for food production and processing, microenterprise activities, and microcredit.

Mercy Corps Indonesia runs several other programs, including emergency relief and longer-term assistance to conflict-affected populations in Maluku and Central Sulawesi Provinces.

The Flood

Beginning on January 29, 2002, Indonesia experienced downpours resulting in massive flooding in Greater Jakarta and other regions of the country. About 15–20 percent of the city was under water at depths of up to 3 meters by February 1. Thousands of people were temporarily homeless, and disease became a major concern.

The flood damaged productive assets and distorted the Jakarta economy. During the disaster, prices of basic food commodities (rice, vegetables, eggs, oil) in the markets doubled or tripled. But beyond the short term, the flood destroyed the houses of the poor in particular, because they tend to live in high-risk areas. Many of them lost a significant part of their belongings, including clothing and house-

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NEWS FROM WASHINGTON

by Ellen Levinson

March 13, 2003

On February 4, 2003, in the midst of continued debate over the FY 2003 budget levels, President Bush submitted to Congress his FY 2004 budget request. The budget estimates FY 2004 spending on food aid programs will be \$1,558 billion. This total includes:

- (1) Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) funded Food for Progress (\$151 million) and Section 416 (\$118 million for surplus nonfat dry milk donations) programs, which do not require congressional appropriations.
- (2) A request for appropriations by Congress for PL 480 Title I (for a program level of \$160 million), Title II (\$1.185 billion) and the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program (\$50 million).

PL 480 Title I – Loans to foreign countries and grants under Food for Progress

	FY 2002 Actual	FY 2003 Est.	FY 2004 Request
Funds	\$124,000,000	\$232,000,000	\$160,000,000
Tons (grain equiv.)	500,000	800,000	600,000

USDA administers the program. Title I primarily provides loans on concessional terms to foreign governments and occasionally to private entities, although grants are also available for Food for Progress programs. The FY 2004 budget request is about the same as the President's FY 2003 budget request. Note that the FY 2003 estimate includes \$72,000,000 in carryover from previous years, but USDA does not expect much if any carryover in FY 2004 because of this year's demand to use any unallocated funds for emergencies.

PL 480 Title II – Grants primarily to PVOs and WFP to alleviate hunger and its causes

	FY 2002 Actual	FY 2003 Est.	FY 2004 Request
Funds	\$971,000,000	\$1,570,000,000	\$1,185,000,000
Tons (grain equiv.)	2,700,000	2,800,000	2,500,000

This chart shows that the Administration is seeking \$1,185,000,000 in appropriations for FY 2004 – the same level it requested for FY 2003. The FY 2003 estimate includes carryover funds plus an additional \$250 million appropriated by Congress to help cover the emergencies in Africa. Considering that commodity costs have increased and emergency needs are anticipated to continue at a high level, the FY 2004 budget request is insufficient to fund 1.875 MMT for nonemergency programs, as required under Title II, plus meet emergency needs.

Regarding FY 2003, the budget debate is not over. By the end of March, the Administration will submit a request for supplemental funding to Congress, primarily to provide additional funds for the military. However, congressmen and senators have urged the Administration to include in its supplemental appropriations request \$350 million more for the emergency needs in Africa and to assure that the regular PL 480 programs are not cut in order to shift funds to emergency needs. Currently, Administration is holding back \$155 million from FY 2003 nonemergency, previously-approved Title II food aid programs in order to shift funds to the African emergencies.

CCC-Funded Food for Progress Grants

	FY 2002 Actual	FY 2003 Est.	FY 2004 Request
Funds	\$126,000,000	\$156,000,000	\$151,000,000

The USDA Budget Summary notes that the \$151,000,000 is an estimate of total CCC expenditures for the program and should be able to provide at least 400,000 MT in FY 2004, assuming the \$40,000,000 cap on transportation and a \$15,000,000 cap on administration funds is adequate for this tonnage level. Congress passed legislation on February 13, 2002 that should remove any questions about statutory requirements for Food for Progress. It states that the President shall make available through CCC a minimum of 400,000 MT each fiscal year, dependent on the \$40,000,000 cap for transportation. The new legislation also requires that this program be made available to eligible nongovernmental organizations and that agreements with such NGOs shall be through USDA.

McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program (IFEP)

	FY 2002 GFEI Actual	FY 2003 Est.	FY 2004 Request
Funds	\$112,000,000	\$100,000,000	\$50,000,000

The FY 2002 level reflects the remainder of the pilot Global Food for Education Initiative from the total \$300,000,000 in CCC funds provided for FY 2001 and 2002. FY 2003 is the first year of IFEP, which was established as a separate authority under the 2002 Farm Bill and in the first year, FY 2003, \$100,000,000 in CCC funds was made available. For future years, Congress must appropriate money for IFEP. The Administration requested \$50,000,000 in FY 2004 appropriations for USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) to continue to implement this program.

Section 416(b) surplus donations through PVOs, cooperatives, governments and WFP

The Administration will make available for international donation commodities acquired by CCC in the normal course of domestic commodity support operations. Under Section 416, the CCC pays for the cost of providing the commodity overseas and USDA administers the program. For FY 2004, the Administration believes that only nonfat dry milk

Food Forum

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Food Forum is published quarterly by Food Aid Management (FAM), an association of 16 United States Private Voluntary Organizations and Cooperatives working together to make U.S. food aid more efficient and effective. With its members, FAM works towards improved food security outcomes by promoting information exchange and coordination, providing forums for discussion and collaboration, and developing food aid standards. The Food Forum provides food aid and food security professionals with a forum for the exchange of technical information, field experience, and recent events.

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will be available and the USDA Budget Summary estimates a total of \$118,000,000 for that program.

Bill Emers on Humanitarian Trust

Able to hold 4,000,000 MT of commodities or an equal amount of cash, CCC administers the BEHT to stabilize the PL 480 program and to provide up to 500,000 MT of commodities for urgent needs in any fiscal year, plus up to another 500,000 MT if the BEHT was not fully tapped for urgent needs in the previous year. In FY 2002, to provide aid to 6 southern African countries, 523,000 MT of wheat were released and 320,000 MT of corn, sorghum, bulgur, vegetable oil and dry beans were purchased for a cost of \$175,000,000 including freight and distribution. There are no estimates in the budget about FY 2003 or FY 2004 use, although it notes that a little less than 2,000,000 MT of wheat are now held in the BEHT.

USAID-Managed Famine Fund

Drawing on the disaster assistance authority provided under section 491 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, the President requests \$200,000,000 in FY 2004 for a new "Famine Fund" to be managed by USAID under the policy direction of State Department, subject to Presidential approval. The budget document states that it would be used to buy food and non-food items, including purchasing food overseas for pre-famine situations.

These funds are different and separate from the President's request for (1) \$236,000,000 in disaster assistance funds for the USAID Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance and (2) \$100,000,000 for the US Emergency Fund for Complex Foreign Crises, which is for preventing and responding to disasters (such as civil war) that are not natural disasters.

Trade Negotiators Propose Changes in Food Aid Programs

By Ellen Levinson

The First Draft of the Modalities for Agriculture for the Doha Trade Round negotiations (issued February 12, 2003) proposed a very different international regime for food aid than the current framework that is implemented through the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Food Aid Convention (FAC). One important change proposed was the elimination of donor government agreements with NGOs for nonemergency food aid programs. A group of US PVOs, called the "Coalition for Food Aid," wrote to the Chairman of the WTO Committee on Agriculture, Stuart Harbinson, objecting to this change. Their letter explained:

"Proposed paragraph 4(a)(ii) would only permit donor countries to provide food aid for nonemergency situations through specialized UN food aid agencies – humanitarian NGOs or private charitable bodies could only access food aid through such UN agencies. This strays from the FAC modalities because it would no longer permit direct agreements between donor governments and humanitarian NGOs, private charitable bodies and recipient governments. This pro-

vision will have the serious and presumably unintended consequence of practically eliminating humanitarian NGOs from using food aid to address chronic hunger, thereby cutting assistance to millions of people....

US NGOs are effectively implementing food security programs throughout the world, using food aid in integrated programs to improve the nutrition of infants and children, rural infrastructure, flood protection, access to clean water, sanitation and agricultural development. NGOs have the comparative advantage of being development agencies with multi-sector expertise, and are not merely food delivery agencies....

Nonemergency food aid programs are similar to other bilateral assistance provided through NGOs – they involve thousands of local partnerships and include skills training and capacity building for local organizations. NGOs cooperate directly with the poor and develop approaches from the perspective of people involved, increasing the capacity of local groups and administrative structures to address a range of social service and development problems. None of these activities conducted by NGOs, whether the assistance is in the form of commodity or cash, "tie" the provision of US assistance to commercial exports from the United States....

It is important to assure that there is flexibility to provide food aid through humanitarian NGOs for emergencies and nonemergency situations since they can often provide the most effective means for achieving results."

US trade negotiators argued for the inclusion of NGOs during WTO negotiations on the food aid language. When the Revised Draft was issued by Mr. Harbinson on March 18, 2003, it permitted donor governments to enter into agreements with humanitarian NGOs and international charitable organizations for nonemergencies. This is a very positive change. However, it is accompanied by unclear language stating that a donor country must submit such NGO programs to the WTO for review. This reporting requirement could be onerous and needs further review. Moreover, in the past, the FAC has been the operative international body for dealing with food aid issues since it brings together appropriate food aid authorities in donor and recipient countries, while participants in the WTO are trade authorities from participating countries.

Finally, the Revised Draft still retains the ban on government-to-government nonemergency food aid programs, except if the grant is in the form of cash for the purchase of food aid. Nor it would allow concessional loans, such as the US PL 480 Title I program.

Negotiations are continuing on the wording of the Modalities on Agriculture, with a goal of finalizing a working paper by March 31, 2003. However, it is unlikely that agreement can be reached on major issues by then. Momentum may pick up as the negotiators get closer to the September 2003 WTO Ministerial Meeting.

hold items, working equipment, and supplies.

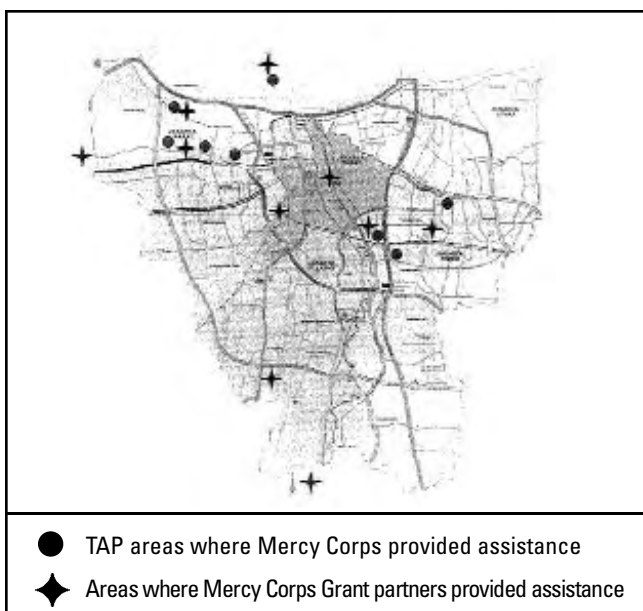
Mercy Corps' Intervention

During the flood, the Mercy Corps office had no official coordinating team, but staff from each program involved in the relief effort met daily. TAP and Grants office staff visited the field to assess the changing situation in flooding areas as rains continued, relying heavily on the Community Organizers and local contacts.

Mercy Corps marshaled existing and new funding for flood-related activities from USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), private companies, and the American Chambers of Commerce. Between January 29 to February 19, the USAID-funded TAP also provided in-kind donations of 144 metric tons of rice, 58 metric tons of wheat soy blend, and 4 metric tons of vegetable oil, which served about 24,000 households.

Using flood donations, the Mercy Corps admin/finance team handled the procurement of relief supplies, and the TAP team handled the distribution through its community networks.

The Grants team also did assessments of neighborhood flooding and received additional information from its partners. Aside from the special external funding for the floods, the Mercy Corps Grants Program provided another Rp. 691 million (about \$75,000) through grants to local NGOs providing flood relief².



Beneficiary Feedback

To find out how well the various assistance providers performed during the flood, Mercy Corps surveyed beneficiaries and conducted focus group discussions.

A fairly typical respondent was a married woman in her forties, maybe with a primary school education. She and her family live in a 1-2 room house of permanent construction, which has a television but probably no piped water or toilet. Her household's income is perhaps \$50 a month. Their house floods at least once a year, and this year the waters have seriously damaged their home and swept away household items such as clothing and furniture.

² In Central and East Java, the Grants program also provided flood relief through three local NGO partners. This case study focuses on Jakarta.

Most households surveyed by Mercy Corps received more than one type of aid during the flooding period, not only from Mercy Corps and its NGO partners but also from local government and possibly political parties, houses of worship, or the military. Being Mercy Corps beneficiaries, almost all the respondents reported receiving uncooked food such as rice (97 of 100) and some type of non-food items (88) such as blankets or cleaning equipment. Two-thirds received medicine and hygiene kits. About half received cooked food from a posko, temporary shelter, or water. Forty percent received school-related assistance such as supplies or uniforms.

Here are some of the main themes of their responses to the questionnaire:

Most respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the aid they received from all sources. When asked to rate the performance of various agencies, by far the most common response was "good." This may reflect a cultural reluctance to criticize directly, particularly to speak negatively about an agency that has provided some help, however limited.

The community was pleased with Mercy Corps' assistance. The survey suggested that most people found Mercy Corps to be responsive, particularly in sections of the city where Mercy Corps already knew the community because of TAP activities. When asked about the organization's positive characteristics, many respondents noted that Mercy Corps "has worked for years in this community" and regularly talks with people and conducts assessments. Some said the organization was "fair" and "honest." The survey and focus group discussions produced only a few negative comments about Mercy Corps. For example, one respondent said it was "too selective" when choosing beneficiaries, another said too many people were involved in the effort, and another that coordination was poor.

The basics were the most appreciated types of aid. Respondents said the most useful types of assistance received were uncooked food such as rice (84% of respondents who received this type of aid ranked it among the most useful), money or financial relief (84%),³ food at a public kitchen (65%), and household non-food items (65%). Assistance less frequently identified as useful included hygiene kits with cleaning equipment, soap, etc. (19%); water (18%); and school supplies (13%). Only six people said they received assistance that was not useful (including water pumps and wheat soy blend, or WSB).

Two types of aid still needed were money and building materials. By early April when the survey was conducted, 3 out of 5 respondents said their lives had more-or-less returned to normal. Of those who still needed post-flood assistance, 14 needed assistance to rebuild their houses and 12 needed working capital.

Most people don't mind signing their names to verify they received the aid. When asked how they felt when a donor agency asks beneficiaries to sign for assistance, 86 of 100 had no objection. Seven said it made them a little uncomfortable. But 13 people volunteered that they had never been asked to sign their names to receive assistance during the flood.⁴ Possibly someone else in the family besides the respondent signed for the aid.

Lessons Learned: Successful Emergency Response

Partnerships Interviews and survey responses illustrate

why an organization such as Mercy Corps is much better able to respond to an emergency if it has a prior on-the-ground presence in affected communities. Mercy Corps' main successes can be largely credited to three types of partnership during the floods:

- Direct partnerships with communities and local government through the TAP;
- Partnership with local NGOs who could respond to the floods with funding from the Grants program; and
- Partnership with flexible donors, USAID and USDA.

Having such bonds already in place enhanced Mercy Corps' speed, targeting, responsiveness, and accountability.

Speed. Before the relief effort truly began, TAP staff were already helping to rescue people and their belongings in flooded areas as the waters rose. In many cases, they were on the ground before even the government and military had fielded assessment teams or rescue personnel. In TAP areas, Mercy Corps had already established relationships with local government figures. Mercy Corps also had experienced staff working in the flooded areas, including a crew of Community Organizers on site who had established links with the communities.

The Grants program had the flexibility to address needs in other areas and in other sectors that the TAP could not. Mercy Corps found it easier to work quickly through NGOs it had worked with before, for several reasons:

- Current NGO partners knew Mercy Corps and understood our expectations;
- The Grants program also knew these NGOs and so could process a contract quickly without spending valuable time assessing the NGOs' capacity.
- In some cases, a contract was already in place for an ongoing project, so the NGO could even temporarily use funding from an existing contract while waiting for emergency.

An existing relationship with USAID also increased the speed of the flood response. USAID was able to quickly provide funds to Mercy Corps and other INGOs such as World Vision and CWS because the prior experience with them and confidence in their systems of targeting and accountability. In addition, Mercy Corps already had USAID-provided resources in stock in North Jakarta (particularly rice, oil, and wheat soy blend) that could be quickly distributed to victims of the flood. USAID could also refer other agencies with funds but no field operations to organizations like Mercy Corps. USDA funding for the Grants program was also invaluable because it is flexible and available for emergency situations as soon as they happen.

Targeting. In times of emergency, an agency that already has a program in low-income areas has two important advantages over one that does not when trying to reach the most needy. First, the agency with experience has already identified the region as a priority area for poverty alleviation. Second, it has also established mechanisms for identifying individuals particularly in need of assistance. So during an emergency, the agency should be able not only to locate those who suffered losses during the catastrophe, but also more quickly reach the poor, who suffer disproportionately

during disasters.

Mercy Corps went through these exercises when it selected Jakarta locations for the TAP, and Helen Keller International's research has verified that the targeting was generally accurate. Mercy Corps flood beneficiaries in TAP areas were primarily its food-for-work beneficiaries, so Mercy Corps had essentially already done most of the targeting before the flood struck.⁵ And not surprisingly, many of the TAP areas are flood prone, because the poor are usually the ones who settle in less-desirable lands such as along canals and in flood plains.

One other note: In the confusion of emergencies, aid sometimes leaks to people who did not actually suffer significant losses. During the Jakarta floods, 13 respondents claimed not to have suffered any permanent loss from the floods but still received assistance from various sources. One advantage of working among those who have previously been identified as low-income may be that even leaked emergency assistance is more likely to go to the poor, even if those poor people were not directly harmed by the current disaster.

Positive characteristics in an aid organization, as identified by respondents:

- knew the area before the flood and has staff in the area
- is always surveying
- frequent field visits and discussions with the community
- has activities that involve the community
- always asks the people first
- works directly with the people
- is a part of the community
- sees the community's daily life
- is willing to listen to the people's concerns

Responsiveness. The agency with experience on the ground should, in theory, have an advantage not only in identifying the poor but also in ensuring that the assistance it provides is appropriate and responsive to the local situation.

Mercy Corps and its experienced NGO partners had several characteristics that improved responsiveness. The TAP team's skills and contacts served them well in assessing changes in the local situation quickly. Since it works in a different way, the Grants team did not have this same level of expertise and knowledge about the Jakarta communities it served. Instead it relied on its partners to investigate changes in flooding levels and the needs of the community, choosing NGOs with experience in the region they were assisting.

Respondents to the survey recognized the value of an organization's knowledge of and links to the community. They appreciated organizations that had spent time with them and found out what they needed most. Most often, they mentioned three ways an organization came to know their community: (1) through visits, surveys, discussions, and "asking questions"; (2) through long experience working in the area; and (3) by living or being based in the community.

Accountability. One important reason for working with known parties and through existing social networks is to ensure the emergency aid is used accountably. The media ran stories during the flood questioning whether intended

³ The government was the main source of cash assistance.

⁴ The questionnaire did not specifically ask this question, but some people told this to the surveyor, who made a note of it on the survey form.

⁵ Additional needy beneficiaries were identified informally, mainly based on the local leader's (RT/RW) knowledge of who in his community was most in need. That may be the best we can do during a crisis, though such a system of choosing additional beneficiaries gives the RT/RW substantial discretion. Surveyor, who made a note of it on the survey form.

beneficiaries were receiving flood assistance they needed and whether government agencies and local NGOs were using funds wisely.

In the TAP areas, Mercy Corps and its local partners already had systems designed to ensure accountability for the aid it provided. For example, Mercy Corps staff and local government knew the donor's record-keeping requirements when releasing donated goods to beneficiaries. The Mercy Corps logistics team already had a system for tracking movements and distributions of food commodities.

The Grants team also had accountability procedures in place for its partners to follow, normally provided with orientation. Since there is little time to provide orientation to NGOs in an emergency, the Grants program relied either on existing NGO partners' experience with Mercy Corps or new partners' experience accounting for grant funding in a similar way. Administratively, the new partnerships required more effort and represented more risk. The results with new organizations were mixed. One NGO, for example, clearly did not have the depth of technical experience required and was logistically unprepared for large crowds expecting food and other aid. On the other hand, a group consisting of volunteer doctors was committed and effective on the ground, despite being administratively difficult because they were not familiar with Mercy Corps' procedures.

With inexperienced NGOs, the risks of compromising accountability in an urgent situation appeared in several areas:

- **Risks associated with front-loading funds** - In an emergency, most funding is usually given when the contract is signed, rather than in installments, so that the organization can quickly buy needed items for distribution. Most of the money is already issued before the NGO's performance can be verified or its financial records reviewed.
- **Budgeting and allowable costs** - Existing partners know what costs are allowable and appropriate. New partners may require additional, time-consuming negotiation.
- **Financial record-keeping and reporting** - The newer NGOs did not have experience in reporting according to Mercy Corps standards.
- **Price comparisons** - Even during an emergency, Mercy Corps and its donors require NGO partners to find competitive prices. This is challenging and frustrating during an emergency, because quantities of key items are in short supply and prices are higher than usual.
- **Accountability tools** - Experienced partners are familiar with Mercy Corps' accountability tools and requirements, such as signature sheets which beneficiaries sign after receiving items.
- **Cost-effectiveness and flexibility** - Reliable, accountable partners will look for ways to reduce costs and ways to use funds wisely and effectively, such as one partner NGO which requested a reallocation of water supply funds when it found they were no longer needed by the community.

Strategy, Skills, and Emergency Systems

In addition to resources and good intentions, an organization working in an emergency must have a clear strategy and the skills and systems to respond effectively. Mercy Corps and its experienced partners had some advantages, but additional preparation would make them better able to respond in the future.

The TAP had several key assets, including experience in the community, a distribution system in place, and local partnerships. The TAP team also had technical skills that are valuable in an emergency, including staff with engineering and logistics skills, the ability to organize large numbers of people, assessment skills in various sectors, and monitoring abilities. Many of the TAP staff already had experience in a similar situation from the previous year's floods in Kampung Melayu and Bukit Duri.

Although the TAP staff performed exceptionally during the flood, the program is not geared to emergency situations. Next time, the TAP team could be even more effective with additional training, a clear strategy, and preparation. Like most NGOs in Jakarta, the Grants partners also do not usually undertake emergency work. Most of them responded skillfully to the flooding, but in some cases the partners' lack of experience resulted in inaccurate situation assessment, limited coordination, and insufficient supplies of goods.

Looking Ahead

The Mercy Corps team has discussed and documented lessons learned from the flood. Offered here are four broad suggestions for improving urban emergency activities in the future.

1. **Recognize our institutional strengths, weaknesses, and limitations**

- Mercy Corps does some things very well, but we should recognize that some sectoral and geographic areas are beyond our expertise. Before - rather than during - a disaster, Mercy Corps should identify its strengths and weaknesses and decide where it can offer some advantage. In other areas, we should act as facilitator and possibly as donor to NGOs, but not as direct implementer. Geographically, our expertise is in areas where we and our NGO partners have established relationships, not only with the community but also with government and other NGOs.

2. **Develop a coordinating team for emergencies** Since disasters happen periodically in Jakarta, Mercy Corps might consider establishing an emergency team here. This team could organize and coordinate response in future disasters. It could also build better communications with the government and other aid providers, before and during the emergency. The team might also have a secondary function as a security team, for example, to help coordinate evacuation of the Jakarta office in the case of threats or disaster.

3. **Build some expertise in urban emergency response** - If we want to continue to seek funding and provide assistance in times of emergency, we should develop our staff capacities in that area and the capacities of our partners. This might mean providing training in such areas as rapid assessment, Sphere standards, and urgent interventions in certain sectors. We could also sponsor staff exchange and trainings between offices in areas related to emergency response. At a minimum, we should review lessons learned from the 2002 flood before the end of the year and encourage our partners to do the same.

4. **Prepare a strategy for flooding and other emergencies**

- Nearly two-thirds of the survey respondents said their houses flood at least once a year, and a quarter said several times a year. Mercy Corps could take such steps as:

- Urging beneficiaries living in flood-prone areas to prepare as the rainy season approaches, and maybe providing

related training/socialization

- Devising a flood-relief strategy before the rainy season, and tentatively deciding the sectors and areas we should work in
- Locating reliable, flexible vendors and making other preparations for fast procurement
- Identifying potential NGO partners in advance to fill sectoral gaps, and discussing emergency procedures and accountability issues with them ahead of time
- Learning about the government's preparations, contingency plans, and lines of communication in case of flooding
- Coordinating with other international NGOs about their plans, if any
- Requesting rapid approval of donor funding if flooding should occur in advance.

Resources on Food-for-Work (FFW) and Cash-for-Work (CFW)

By Trisha Schmirler, Technical Information Specialist, Food Aid Management (FAM)

Food-for-work programs, while never really gone from program portfolios, are experiencing a resurgence in interest among the United States PVO community. Therefore, we present you with this brief bibliography of resources available from our resource center and/or the internet. While this does not encompass all the resources on food-for-work available in our library or elsewhere, it does showcase the breadth of topics available, with respect to both practical program guidance and theoretical studies.

Food security assessment mission and shipment and distribution of non-food items. Final Report, September 30, 2001 – March 31, 2002 Church World Service, 2002. 57p. FSRC #8218.

Final report of Church World Service on a project to distribute donated clothing in Kabul, between February 1 and February 28, 2002. Briefly outlines programme objectives, performance, monitoring, coordination and expenditure. Appendix A is the findings of a food security assessment mission, completed by Church World Service for USAID. It assesses the complex emergency situation in Afghanistan and proposes interventions to assist in increasing the access to food by Afghans. Recommendations include monetization of PL 480 Title II commodities in Pakistan and developing Cash for Work projects.

Can food-for-work programs reduce vulnerability? Barrett, Christopher B.; Holden, Stein; and Clay, Daniel C. 2001. 44p. Online as an Adobe pdf file at: http://aem.cornell.edu/faculty_sites/cbb2/Papers/Food%20for%20Work%20Final%20Nov%202001.PDF

Prepared for the UN University's World Institute for Development Economics Research Project, "Insurance Against Poverty", this paper seeks to develop a better understanding of how, why, and when Food-for-Work (FFW) programs can reduce vulnerability. It examines the effects of FFW both in the short term (as a safety net), and in the long-term, as a transitional activity to help communities improve livelihoods and rebound from shocks.

How accurate is food-for-work self-targeting in the

presence of imperfect factor markets? Evidence from Ethiopia. Barrett, Christopher B. and Clay, Daniel C. 2001. 42p. Available online as an Adobe pdf file at: http://www.inequality.com/publications/working_papers/FFW.pdf

Effective targeting of transfers is a key issue in public policy to combat poverty. Much faith is presently placed in self-targeting mechanisms such as public employment schemes supported by food-for-work transfers. Where targeting errors have been observed, these are usually attributed to mismanagement of key operational details, such as the project's wage rate. Using a unique data set from rural Ethiopia, we demonstrate that targeting errors run far deeper in some low-income countries. We hypothesize that imperfect factor markets generate a predictable dispersion across households in reservation wage rates that breaks down the unconditionally positive relation between income and shadow wages on which the theory of self-targeting public employment programs rests.

A review and evaluation of CARE International Bangladesh's sampling and estimation procedures for the integrated food for work project. Battaglia, Michael P.; CARE. 1992. 35p. FSRC #7911.

The objectives of this review were to determine the statistical soundness of CARE's wheat reimbursement procedures and to recommend improvements in reporting formats, as well as new sampling procedures that would enable CARE to reimburse the government of Bangladesh for wheat expenditures at the district level.

Evaluation of food-for-work pilot projects: final report. De Leon, Eberto; Zannotti, Jose Rolando; Catholic Relief Services (CRS). 1996. 34p. FSRC #7698.

This is an evaluation report of food-for-work projects conducted by Catholic Relief Services in three pilot areas (Zacapa-Chiquimala, Totonicapan and San Marcos) in Guatemala

CRS/Rwanda food security program: Pilot Marais Development Project. Catholic Relief Services (CRS), 1998. 15p. FSRC #6963.

This TAP project proposal is part of an integrated program based on the development of 300 hectares of marais lands in two communes in Rwanda. The program was designed as a watershed management program using Food for Work commodities, and includes components such as soil/water conservation, agroforestry, goat restocking, feeding programs, training rural credit management, and construction of farm-to-market roads. Six thousand families (33,000 people) are the beneficiaries of this project.

Food-for-work in Ethiopia: Challenging the scope of project evaluations. Humphrey, Liz. IDS Working Paper #81. 1998. 38p. Available online in Adobe pdf format at: <http://www.ids.ac.uk/ids/bookshop/wp/wp81.pdf>

Evaluations of numerous Food-for-Work (FFW) projects in operation across Ethiopia are designed to assess their effectiveness, and are often defined by the objectives stated in the terms of reference. The paper asserts that the quality and usefulness of evaluations is greatly enhanced when the qualitative impacts of a project on the beneficiaries are included in the assessment since they often have a direct influence on conventional donor concerns such as targeting and the mode of payment. An evaluation framework is proposed which covers the design and delivery, outputs and impacts of a project and this structure is then adopted for a review of FFW evaluation.

ation documents. The analysis reveals the heavy emphasis on design and delivery mechanisms in the literature, and suggests the scope of evaluation exercises might be broadened to capture both the intended and unforeseen socio-economic impacts of a project.

Food aid delivery, food security and aggregate welfare in a small open economy: Theory and evidence. Osakwe, Patrick M, and the Bank of Canada. *Bank of Canada Working Paper #98-1*. 1998. 42p. FSRC #6869.

This paper presents a theoretical model illustrating the effects of food aid on labor employment, food security, and aggregate welfare in an environment in which private sector firms pay efficiency wages in order to overcome the moral hazard problems associated with the use of hired labor. Both project food aid and non-project food aid are considered.

CARE-Ethiopia community infrastructure improvement-add selected impact indicators to measure periodic impact of programme objectives. CARE Ethiopia, 1996. [70p.] FSRC #5669.

This proposal builds on a 1994 study of CARE-Ethiopia's community infrastructure improvement/urban food for work program (see FSRC# 01206), and seeks to add impact measurement indicators to the process indicators already being used. Impact indicators are proposed and described in the following categories: household food consumption, income, savings, women in urban food for work positions, improved access to infrastructure, and sustainability. Includes documents from the 1994 study.

Proceedings of a workshop on improving the food security effects of food for work. Lowenthal, Janet M.; Pines, James; Schlossman, Nina; and USAID/Bolivia. 1993. 70p. FSRC #5520.

A related document, the study which led to this workshop, is call #646. The workshop was intended to discuss optimizing food security in USAID Food-for-Work projects, as a part of the design and implementation of a monitoring evaluation approach for the food security impact of Title II projects in Bolivia. The appendices (which are in Spanish), describe not only the agenda and participants, but also provide handouts on methodology, a rationale for calculating the net increase in income from FFW projects, a case study, and a brief guide to developing a monitoring and evaluation system for FFW.

Food/cash for work interventions in famine mitigation. Bryson, Judy C. and Steve Hansch, 1993. FSRC #1888.

This paper proposes strategies for using various combinations of food and cash - cash/food-for-work, cash/food incentives, and cash/food transfers in the service of famine mitigation. Both food and cash have value to target groups in famine-prone areas, the authors observe, but the relative values of the two differ in different local (village and household) situations. The authors recommend that famine mitigation strategies give priority to cash interventions combined with measures to increase local food production and strengthen markets.

Food for work: A review of the 1980s with recommendations for the 1990s. Bryson, Judy C.; Chudy, John P.; Pines, James M.; and USAID. 1990. 68p. FSRC #1887.

This document intends to "review the experience of A.I.D. cosponsors and WFP with Title II FFW programs worldwide...provide some insight into the longer history of this type

of program in each world region...1) conditions where FFW is the most appropriate...2) conflict between food needs and development priorities, 3) problems of labor productivity, 4) the emergency/development interface and 5) management versus project realities..."

WFP/IL.O guidelines for food for work versus paid labour. World Food Programme (WFP); United Nations Food & Agriculture Organization (FAO); International Labour Organization (ILO). 1992. 2p. FSRC #1351.

This paper gives guidelines for when providing food for work rather than cash is acceptable

Program evaluation, impact assessment, food security assessment of CARE-Ethiopia's Addis Ababa, community infrastructure improvement/urban food for work program. Khassay, Ato; Mekonnen, W.Z.O.; Sutter, Phil; and Yimer, Ato. 1994. 85p. FSRC #1206.

This evaluation tries to determine urban food for work impact on urban development, household food security of the project participants, the degree to which the program attained its intermediate goals and indicators, and to identify various options that might improve food aid and project targeting.

Assessment of the income, food security, and nutrition consequences of urban food for work in Bolivia. Pines, James; Schlossman, Nina; Lowenthal, Janet; Women and Infants Nutrition Support Project. 1992. 71p. FSRC #646.

"This report assesses the food security and nutrition consequences, income impact, and commodity ration adequacy for the USAID/Bolivia Urban Food for Work Program (UFFW)," examining three programs conducted by three NGOs and one local municipality. All three programs used a rural food for work model to build urban food for work programs, which had unanticipated outcomes and reduced effectiveness. The study concludes that all three programs could improve food security outcomes through: (1) greater attention to targeting the most vulnerable (in this case, low-income women in highly food insecure areas), (2) recalculation of rations to bring them up to 80% of minimum wage, (3) payment in local, widely-accepted commodities (or education on use of unfamiliar commodities, if no alternative is available), (4) enhancing and rewarding productivity by various means, (5) increased monitoring and flexibility in project administration, and (6) reduction of travel and economic burdens associated with participation.

Food for work: An analysis of current experience and recommendations for future performance. Thomas, John W. Harvard Institute for International Development, USAID. 1985. 75p. FSRC #75

"reviews the performance of FFW Programs supported by U.S. Public Law 480 food commodities, provided to U.S. PVOs...to analyze past experience and recommend changes in policy and design of FFW programs that would improve performance."

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